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ABSTRACT

Described and evaluated is a Marion County, Florida, program which applied the team teaching method to instruction of 45 educable mentally retarded 10- to 14-year-old students. It is stressed that the philosophy of the middle schools and of team teaching is to provide a means of meeting individual needs of students. Described are the program's physical facilities (one large and two small classrooms), qualifications of five team members, the student population (97% black), and curriculum development. Explained are goals and objectives in the area of self concept, social relations, and academics. Reported are results of program evaluation showing that growth in the areas of reading and arithmetic matched the time lapse between test administrations, and that important positive behavioral changes were observed in student attitudes, independence and pride in work, peer relationships, and self control. A final section focuses on the instructional process of the teaming program in terms of variables (such as the need for peer group acceptance), staff, and program scheduling and policies. Also discussed is the process of developing individual educators to become cooperating team members. Recommendations are given in the areas of personnel selection, classroom management, curriculum, and physical space. Appended are a questionnaire, a teacher evaluation form, and a lesson plan form. (DB)

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A 'TEAM TEACHING APPROACH FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL EMR STUDENTS

EC 060 774

A TITLE VI-B PROJECT
DEVELOPED BY MARION COUNTY SCHOOLS
OCALA, FLORIDA

ED 085935

A TEAM TEACHING APPROACH FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL EMR STUDENTS

DEVELOPED BY

MARION COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILD EDUCATION

A Title VI B Grant of

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act

July 1973

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PREFACE

Since this project is process oriented and developmental in nature the dissemination of this document will follow a sequential design.

The table of contents reflects this in that each section will be numbered internally.

Methods of evaluation, results, summary, conclusions and recommendations will be added to this document at the conclusion of the project in July, 1973.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years a nationwide movement has emerged for the establishment of an organizational plan to serve the intermediate or middle years in the educational process.

Marion County has joined this movement and has organized its instructional program to include a grade structure to provide for the "middle years".

The middle schools, accommodating youngsters from ages ten to fourteen, encompass a philosophy which will permit each child to find success in the school setting at a level at which he is able to succeed.

Perhaps paramount in Marion County's philosophy of the middle school is that each child will be allowed to move through the continuum of growth with school experiences provided in terms of emotional, social, and physical as well as intellectual development -- not necessarily contingent upon chronological age.

With the additional philosophy in Marion County that exceptional children should be an integral part of the total school program, it became apparent that new ways be explored for more effective utilization of staff.

An ESEA Title VI-B project proposal entitled, "Alternative

Approaches to Instruction and Scheduling of Middle School EMR Students", was prepared and submitted to the Florida Department of Education. The project was funded in the amount of $21,469.00 effective July 1, 1971. The first year of operation explored the development of the team with concentration on:

1. Selection of members
2. Identification of personal characteristics
3. Development and definition of roles

An evaluation of the 1972 fiscal years was disseminated through the State Department of Education.

The outcome of the first year's project pointed out the need for re-definition of team leadership, membership and facilities.

A project proposal for continuation was submitted and funded for fiscal year 1973 in the amount of $19,789.00.

PROJECT RATIONALE

Team teaching has long been recognized as a method of instruction which would better allow for recognition of individual differences in children and would provide a means of meeting the needs of these individual differences.

Though this organizational design for instruction is recognized in general education, there have been few attempts to relate this method to the EMR population.

This project established a team approach and attempted, through process development of the team, to discern variables of the team teaching system as it applies to EMR students.

An attempt was made to answer the following questions:

1. Can a team teaching method be adapted to an EMR population?
2. Can the team teaching approach adapt itself to a developmental process?

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The description of the project is divided into four areas:

1. Facilities
2. Team Members
3. Students
4. Curriculum

FACILITIES:

The facilities for the project consisted of a classroom for large group instruction, and two classrooms for small group and/or individualized instruction. It also included an activity room with double sinks, toilets with locker space, and teacher office space. It was within this sub-facility that the majority of the activities in the exploration of team teaching was accomplished. Students also participated in integrated learning activities within the regular school program in such areas as health, music, art, shop, physical education, home economics and agriculture.

TEAM MEMBERS:

The team members for the fiscal year 1973 consisted of:

1. A Master Teacher

   This person was chosen due to competencies displayed in her depth of understandings of the EMR child and curri-

culum for the EMR child, past successful experiences with EMR students and ability to function as a participating member of a total school faculty.

Experience: Four years experience in the Florida school system, three of these being in Marion County.

Training: Undergraduate training was taken at Queens College, Indiana University and the University of Miami. A graduate degree was earned at the University of Florida in the area of EMR.

2. Two Teachers

   a. One male team member was chosen. His experience includes two years work with exceptional children as an art therapist. He received his training at Natchitoches State College in Nathitoches, Louisiana. He was chosen because of his training in art for the handicapped and past experience. The final decision for employment was based on an interview by the master teacher.

   b. The third team member received her training at the University of Florida. She was also chosen after an interview with the master teacher. Although she is a first year teacher her student teaching experience was excellent. It was done in a school setting much like the school housing the Title VI-B project. She was highly recommended by all persons knowing her

professionally.

3. One Paraprofessional

   This person was with the project as an aide last year. She demonstrated her ability to work successfully with this group of students. She has two years of college and holds a substitute teachers certificate.

4. One Teacher Aide

   The aide worked in the project last year. In addition to having a high school diploma, she has demonstrated exceptional ability in working with students.

STUDENT POPULATION:

Marion County's school population is districted in school attendance according to geographical areas. The home school for the Title VI-B project was formerly a high school housing an all black population; however, under the new geographical attendance zones -- it was changed to house a middle school. The total school population now consists of 76% black and 24% white students.

The Title VI-B project student population is 97% black and 3% white.

The total project population was evaluated and determined to be EMR by a certified school psychologist. The age range of

the students served was 10 - 14. Total number of students served was 45; 17 of which were females.

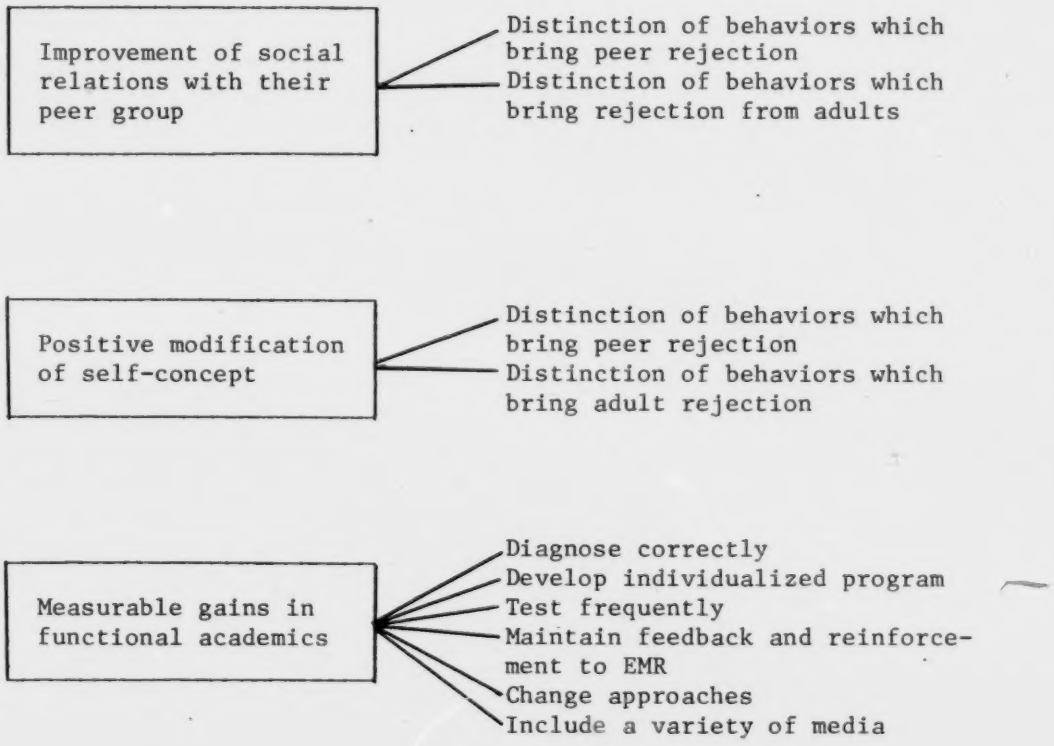
CURRICULUM:

Curriculum competencies were determined by team members and consultants. Planning and workshops with a consultant from the University of Florida were held on a weekly basis throughout the project in order that a sequential curriculum could be developed. The skills which the curriculum lends itself to were stated in behavioral terms. This was expedited through the use of plan books developed for this purpose.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal: Through instruction provided, EMR children will experience success to such an extent that they will positively modify their self concept, improve their social relations with their peer group, and evidence measurable gains in their functional academics.

LONG AND SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES


Improvement of social relations with their peer group
Distinction of behaviors which bring peer rejection
Distinction of behaviors which bring rejection from adults
Positive modification of self-concept
Distinction of behaviors which bring peer rejection
Distinction of behaviors which bring adult rejection
Measurable gains in functional academics
Diagnose correctly
Develop individualized program
Test frequently
Maintain feedback and reinforcement to EMR
Change approaches
Include a variety of media

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

It was decided that to adequately evaluate the program, several areas would have to be assessed. The first of these areas was that of academic achievement. The instrument utilized in this study was the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), which taps a student's ability in the areas of reading, spelling and arithmetic. Although there are several weaknesses in the test, it was felt that its adaptability to this program warranted its use. First of all, it is a widely used instrument that has a large standardization population. Secondly, the team teachers, with minimal instruction, could administer the test effectively. Third, it can be administered rather quickly, and the results are immediately known.

This point, along with the fact that the students can be re-evaluated frequently, using the same instrument, allowed the team members to adjust their curriculum according to the needs of the individual student. If, for example, a student showed fourth grade proficiency in math and first grade proficiency in reading, the curriculum could be arranged so that more time was spent on the acquiring of reading skills.

The WRAT was administered once each six weeks (approximately eight students per week). This allowed for each student to be re-evaluated four times from the first evaluation to the end of

the school year. It was felt that the six week time sequence would negate any test-wise phenomenon within the target population.

The first and last administration of the WRAT also provided a pre - post measure of the student's total academic growth during the experimental period.

The second area of assessment was that of behavior and self-concept. These two areas were assessed by using a behavior checklist. The self-concept assessment was done by utlizing the checklist for several reasons. Although self-concept scales are in existance, the results on pre - post measures of these scales can be positively explained no matter what the outcome. A drop in self-concept from a pre to post measure can be deemed positive, because the child had an unrealistically high concept of himself and his capabilities on the pre measure, and moved, positively, to a lower more realistic concept of self. On the other hand, a positive growth from a pre to post measure can be explained in positive terms because the child moved from a lower realistic concept of self to a higher more realistic one.

It was felt that the best measure of a child's concept of self was through the behavior checklist. Children that do not realistically perceive themselves can not effectively, in social situations, take pride in their accomplishments, or e: ctively

work independently.

Those behaviors, then, that are assessed on the behavior checklist, are relevant in assessing how well a child has accurately integrated a realistic, positive concept of himself and his capabilities.

The assessment of behavior is a much more difficult task than the assessment of academic growth. It was decided after a review of existing behavior checklists, that it would be more beneficial to construct a checklist that more closely reflected the behaviors exhibited by the students in the program. The existing checklists are relatively new, do not have large standardization populations and for the most part are not constructed with identified special education students as the target population. Also, we were not so much interested in how our students compared with other populations, but rather how their behavior changed in the course of the experimental program. This was best accomplished by a pre - post administration of checklist that accurately described the behaviors that the students within the program exhibited at the beginning of the evaluation period.

Four observation periods, lasting several hours each, were used to identify the behaviors exhibited by the program population. These behaviors were then written in a manner that would clearly

identify these and keep them separate and apart from other observed behaviors. Existing checklists were scanned and those items that clearly reflected observed behaviors within our target population were utilized. The items of the checklist were arranged and assessment was done using a five point Likert Scale Format. The items were worked so that a one on the Likert Scale was always the least desirable and a five on the Likert Scale was always the most desirable end of the continuum. All items can be added to yield a total behavior score, both for each individual student and for the class as a whole. In this way, casual observation of the pre - post total scores would reveal any gains or losses in desirable behavior. Statistical treatment of the pre - post total scores would reveal whether or not the gains or losses were significant.

The original checklist consisted of forty-seven items. Two of the three team teachers were asked to identify twelve students within the program that were equally familiar to both of them. The original checklist was then administered by the two team members individually to each of the twelve selected students. The team members were asked to comment on those items that seemed ambiguous or redundant. In addition, an item analysis was run to check how closely each of the two team members agreed on each individual student by item. Because of the closeness of the five point scale, any item that was more than one point apart was dis-

carded. This procedure gave us a very high interater reliability. In addition, those items which were thought by the raters to be ambiguous were either changed or discarded.

A factor analysis was undertaken to ascertain the clustering of the items. The analysis yielded four distinct behavior factors. Those items that were doubtful within any of the clusters were also discarded.

Following are the factors and the items contained within them:

Factor One - This factor taps self-control; a necessity if the class is to run smoothly and a learning atmosphere is to be maintained.

Items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 19, 20, 21

Factor Two - This factor taps the student's desire to help and get along with the other members of the class.

Items: 22, 23, 24, 25

Factor Three- This factor taps the student's ability to work independently and to take pride in his/her work.

Items: 11, 12, 13, 14, 26

Factor Four - This factor taps the student's feelings about the school in general and the special program in particular.

Items: 15, 16, 17

The final checklist totaled twenty-five items.

In the first year of the project (1971-72), the main thrust of the program was to establish a basic team teacher approach. It was expected, as a result of this, alternative directions using the team approach as a base could be explored.

Evaluation of the first year of the project revealed that although the team approach was verbalized by the team members, in practice it was difficult to implement. The students, then, in the first year of the project, were not exposed to the traditional practices of team teaching.

In the beginning of the second year (1972-73) of the study, the main thrust was to see that the basic team approach was established. Until this was done, evaluation of the students would have been premature.

Because of the procedure used in building the behavior checklist, it was not ready for implementation until the beginning of the second term of the school year. Although the rather late start in the behavior assessment phase of the program evaluation would normally be of concern because of some unique conditions affecting this project, it was decided to use this approach. In other words, it was the feeling that the team approach had not materialized in the the previous year and an accurate base line of the student's level of behavior within the project description

could not be established. Although we knew that it would be more difficult to obtain a positive growth taking the pre-measure at mid-year, we felt that it would be a truer indication of the base level at which the students were functioning.

The third phase of the assessment program was intended to show any increases or decreases in the quantity and quality of the work output of the students. It would not be clear from the analysis of the academic achievement information, or the behavior checklist, the amount and accuracy of the work the students were completing. The assessment of this phase of the program was a fairly simple one. Each student was assigned a folder in which all completed work, after being dated, was filed. Periodic reviews of these folders allowed the team members to assess whether or not their methods for motivating the students were successful. In this way a decision to change the methods used in working with individual students could be based on pertinent data, rather than being influenced by the types of behavior exhibited by the student. A student could conceivably appear to be on task often, but a review of his folder would more accurately demonstrate the child's work output. These folders then were valuable tools in determining "on task" behavior, as well as the quality of the work completed in the program.

RESULTS OF EVALUATION

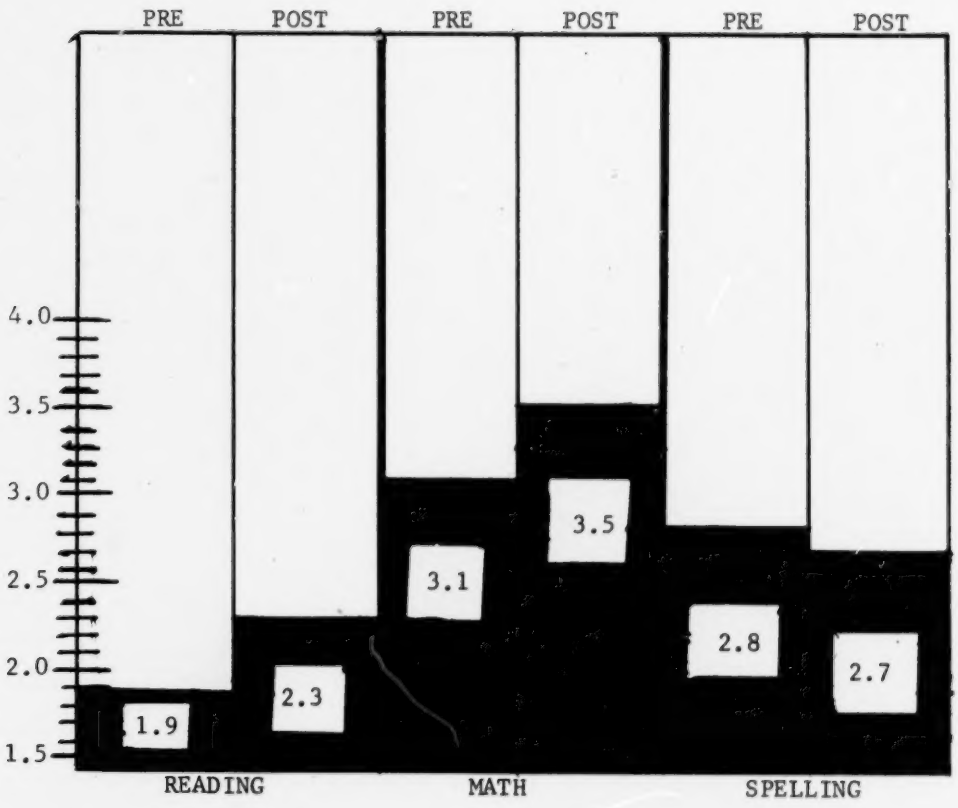
As was stated in the description of the evaluation process, three areas of student assessment was undertaken; academic, behavior and self-concept, and work output. These three areas of evaluation relate directly to the long and short term objectives of the project and results were found as follows:

ACADEMIC

The February and May administrations of the Wide Range Achievement Test were used as the pre-post measures, respectively, of academic achievement.

The mean grade level of achievement in each of the three areas; reading, spelling and arithmetic were computed for the entire class. The mean differences between the two test administrations in each of the academic areas were then compared to the time lapse from the pre-post measure.

As illustrated in graph one, the mean growth for the class in both reading and arithmetic matched the four-month time lapse between administrations. This rate of growth is what would be expected from a "normal population". The mean change in the spelling level shows that there was an average loss of one month in the four months between administrations.



GRAPH #1

Grade Levels Attained on the Pre-Post Administration of the WRAT (Four month time lapse between administrations)

BEHAVIOR AND SELF-CONCEPT

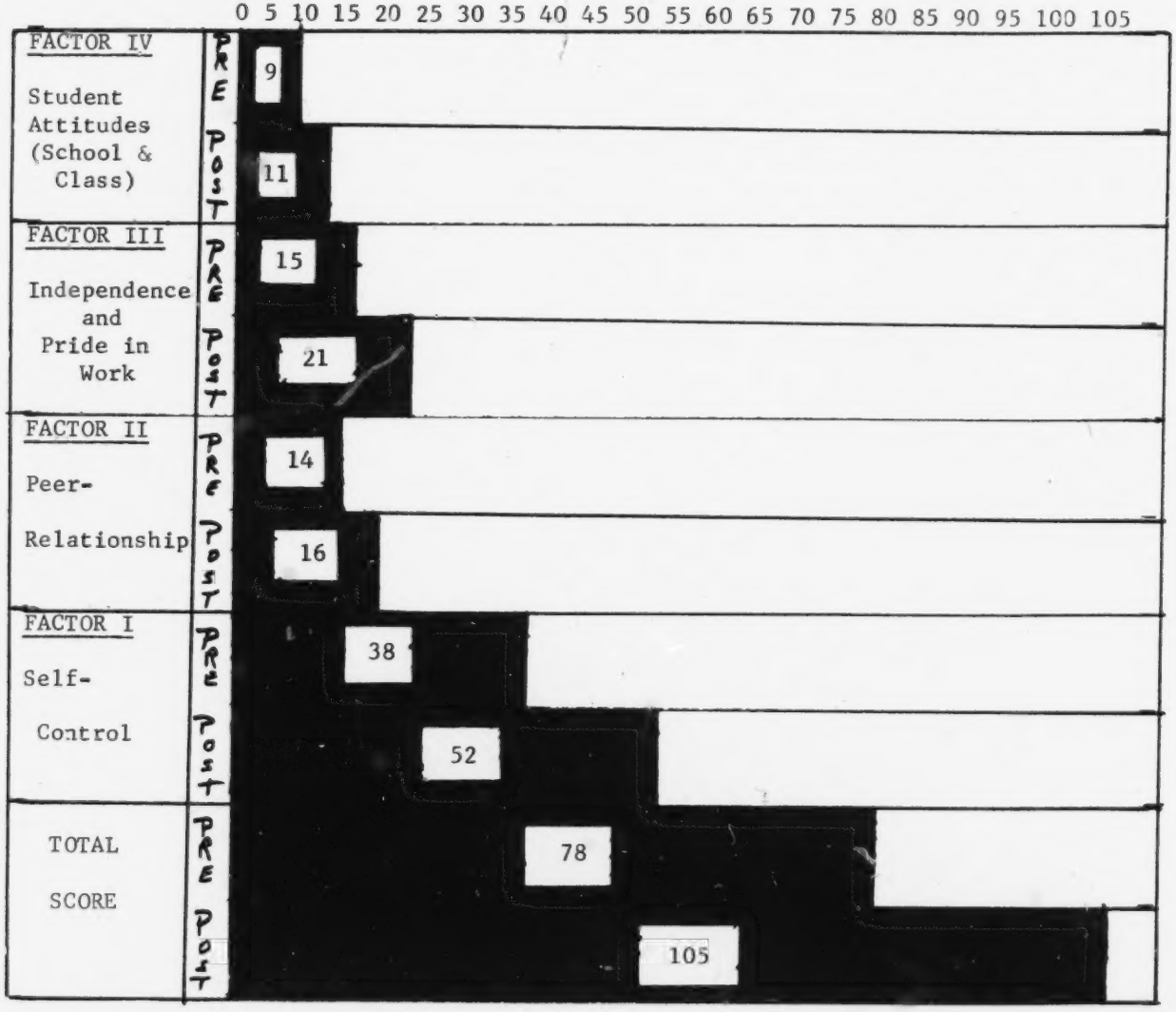
The inter-rater reliability, on the pre-measure, using the teachers as raters, was .93. The Pierson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation was used to ascertain reliability.

The same statistical procedure revealed an inter-rater reliability of .91 on the post-measure using the mean, teacher as rater scores, as one rater, and the mean, teacher aide scores as the other rater. The teachers then were the raters for the pre-measure and the teacher aides were the raters for the post-measure.

The Wilcoxin Matched Pairs Signed Ranks test was used to test for significance between the pre and post measures. Significance was tested for in the four identified factors as well as in the total behavioral instrument.

The pre, raw score data showed a low point total of 34 and a high point total of 107. All post, raw scores showed growth in a positive direction with a low gain of four points and a high gain of 59 points.

Graph number two indicates that significance was above the .01 level in each of the identified factors as well as the total score.



GRAPH #2

Mean Scores on the Pre-Post Behavior Assessment Scale (Total score and all four factor scores are significant above the .01 level)

DAILY RECORD FOLDERS

This area of assessment was not treated statistically as the prime use of the individual folders was as a tool for further individualization of the curriculum and as a check on the students' use of his/her file.

The daily record folders made for each student contained:

1. A calendar on which was kept a daily record of the amounts and types of work completed.
2. Examples of the students' work.
3. A bank statement showing the number of points deposited and withdrawn. This was in conjunction with some of the behavior modification techniques employed in the program.

Primarily, the record folders were designed as an aide to the team in curriculum planning and proved to be an effective tool for this purpose. However, by the record folders being made accessible to the student, it was found that this was an excellent student motivational tool also, as it provided constant feedback on performance.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION PROCESS

Although the growth in the areas of reading and arithmetic matched the time lapse between test administrations, this should not be misconstrued to mean that educable mentally retarded students have the ability to progress at a "normal" rate. The actual grade levels at which they performed were well below their normal age group. Therefore, skills learned were at a difficulty level of a child several years younger.

The data does imply, however, that educable mentally retarded students can acquire academic skills when the material is presented in a team teaching situation. This seems to be evidenced by variations of teacher/pupil ratio, flexibility of scheduling, individualization of curriculum, immediate feedback on performance, and the number of adult models for emulation.

The fact that there was an actual drop of one month in the area of spelling did not, in fact, cause much concern among the staff. There was little or no room in the curriculum for rote memorization of material. The words on the list could have been presented in rote fashion, but this method would not have been compatible with the goals of the project as developed by the instructional approach of the team.

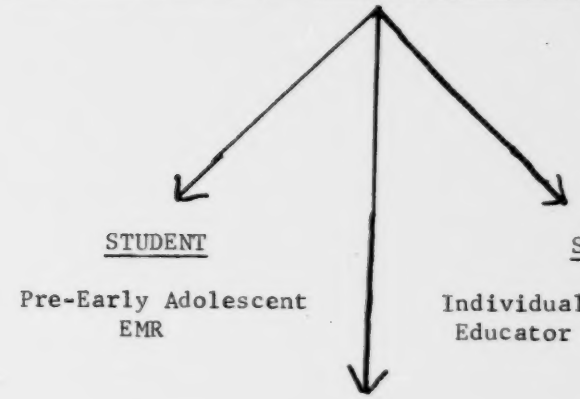
The behavioral change that occurred in the students within the study was the most significant finding.

It has been the thinking of many special educators that educable mentally retarded students cannot function as well within large groups. The findings of this study refute these statements. It was the contention of the administrators of this project that a rise in self-concept would be reflected in a behavioral change; especially in those behavioral areas that deal with helping others and with self-motivation. All behavioral factors identified showed significant change in a positive direction.

The entire student evaluation process, then, points to the fact that acceptable behavior and growth in self-concept and academic growth can be accomplished among an educable mentally retarded population within a team-teaching middle school situation.

TEAMING: THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

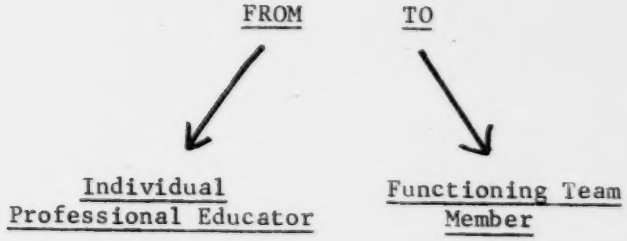
I. VARIABLES OF THE TEAM TEACHING SYSTEM AS IT APPLIED TO THE EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED



Amoeba Like In Character

Designed	to meet the needs of the early adolescent EMR
Encompassed	within a physical space not specifically designed for flexibility
Directed	toward middle school philosophy
Augumented	by a team approach

II. PROCESS DEVELOPMENT OF TEAM



VARIABLES

The middle school student is at an age when peer group acceptance is of prime importance. This need for identity is reflected in his dress, mannerisms and behavior. The program for the educable mentally retarded should reflect the total philosophy within the school which is one of exploration and enrichment. The student should be a part of the total school environment, as well as the classroom for the educable mentally retarded, and these settings should be compatible.

The students within this study, in general, come from a predominantly black area. Since this is a neighborhood school, the majority of the students walk. This fact is significant in that much of the socialization with peer groups continues in after-hours. This compounded the need for the EMR student to have opportunities to positively modify self-concepts through improvement of social relationships with peer groups and an attainment of measurable gains in functional academics.

STAFF

As has been previously stated, the first year of operation of this project concerned itself with the attempt to bring together three professionals with similar experience and provide in-service training which would allow for the emergence of the leadership

role definitions. The first year's evaluation of the project pointed out that this method of teaming was not successful, at least in this given situation.

In the second year of the project the professionals and aides were chosen from a wide background of experiences and the leadership role was designated. In-service activities were structured so as to provide positive direction in role defining and development, team planning, classroom management, space utilization and role changing as need occurred. The gradual emergence from individual professional educator and aides to becoming team members will be discussed in the section PROCESS DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEAM.

PROGRAM

The instructional program was designed to meet the intellectual, emotional, social and physical needs of the early adolescent educable mentally retarded student; individually and as a member of his peer group. It was amoeba-like in character in that the curricula format experienced a series of modifications. The aide to this was through scheduling variations.

The scheduling consisted of four periods of small groups which were based on the students' over-all program and individual needs. Two periods were scheduled for Physical Education and enrichment programs with the regular middle school classes. Scheduling was

designed to be flexible in order that a student's schedule could be changed if, and when, his needs changed. The open classroom team teaching concept allowed for this possibility.

The objectives for the program were stated as long term:

1. To develop a realistic and positive self-concept.
2. To academically and physically develop the student's ability to his maximum potentials.
3. To have the student understand and perform acceptable social behavior.
4. To have the student aware of the world in which he will live - emphasizing the responsibilities of a contributing member of society.
5. To develop an acceptable sense of values.

However, to reach the long term objectives, planning toward a curriculum which would be student-centered and provide for exploration and participation called for a unit-type curriculum with short term objectives.

Initially, a highly structured, re-enforcing program was utilized. This was deemed necessary due to the students' behavior indicating negative attitudes towards school and learning. During this initial period, tangible re-enforcements were used in order to maintain a learning atmosphere.

As behavior was positively modified toward learning, the classroom became more academically oriented and it was found that the need

for highly tangible re-enforcements diminished. As this more positive attitude by the students occurred, changes in the curriculum occurred. Flexibility became the keynote. The curriculum became more individualized. Special projects were incorporated into the students' program. The open space concept became effective, allowing for an interchange of centers by the team and the students in order to utilize all areas for definite instructional goals. Scheduling students into enrichment programs outside the classroom within the entire middle program became effective.

As the individual needs of the students began to emerge as the focal point for the curriculum approach, personnel could now utilize more productive teaching methods.

PROCESS DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEAM

The developmental process of a team is one which moves along a continuum, beginning at one point with individual professional educators who, in progressing through a series of encounters, role identification crises and negotiations, emerge, if these latter experiences are successful, at another point on the continuum as a teaching team.

It is at the emergence point of teamship and the benefits to be offered students from this teamness to which most of the literature is directed. Very little has been written concerning the period of professional trauma in between, nor have many, if any, life lines been given to enable educators to move through what can be a professionally difficult time. Therefore, chagrin can be frequently experienced when an individual educator with a strong professional self-concept and an approach of "that to think is to be" agrees to become a teacher on a team. The affective and performance domains are to be as actively involved as the cognitive.

One of the missing life lines is the recognition of the fact that a period of confusion is to be expected and should be accepted as a positive factor in the development of the team process. Encounters, role identification crises, and negotiations, both conscious and unconscious, will be precipitated by: the different philosophical orientations and instructional biases of the team members;

the roles of administrative leadership; the instructional leadership and the fellowship/leadership alternation; and the differences in self-perception of performance and colleague-viewed perception of one's performance.

The individuals employed for the second year of the project were assigned two developmental tasks:

- to move from individuals (special educators and aides) to a team
- to ascertain variables, if any, of the team teaching approach as it applied to EMR students

Team leadership was established and cautionary statements were given to all participants to expect an initial period of anxiety. They were requested to observe behaviors, individual or team, comfortable or uncomfortable, as they occurred to be as points along a continuum which were to be examined and learned from in order to promote further advancement in teaming.

During this time of uncertainty, the most important developments would be those of two matrices: trust and communication of positive reinforcement of the individual's performance as an emerging team member. The team leader, instructional members of the team, and the aides would all be experiencing a malaise peculiar to team development and must have these two matrices functioning to develop, maintain, and enhance team rapport.

As in any developmental process, gains would be experienced and

then a stress situation would occur which would cause regression. The degree of regression would be dependent upon trust and communication previously attained.

At the point on the continuum at which teamness occurs, one of the characteristics of teamness would be a hold against the kinds of regressions experienced during the transitional stage.

They were also advised that a pre-determined time limit could not be set for the transition from individuality to teamship. The rapidity with which the team-identity would develop would depend upon the individuals, their willingness to negotiate responsibilities and their willingness to modify their roles toward a role as perceived by their colleagues. This would be as significant a behavior for the administrative leader as it would be for the instructional and aide members of the emerging team.

In order to create and maintain the team operation, team roles and relationships needed establishment. These roles and relationships were the result of the melding together of self and group analyses of the behavioral responses to the following kinds of questions:

- were good pupil/teacher relationships displayed?
- was the teacher able to separate ethnic behaviors from adolescent or retardate behaviors; and recognize to which of these behaviors he might be overly reacting because of his own life style?

- did the individual continue to display a positive self-concept as an instructor as he moved from an individual to a team role?
- did he maintain a cooperative attitude toward team efforts?
  - or did the changing roles within the team tend to cause the individual to become rigid or to withdraw, or both?
  - or to become agressive and challenging to the administrative leadership of the team or to fellow team members?
  - when this occurred, was the individual able to recognize and deal with this (these) behavior(s)?
- did he share in the evaluative process of self, team, pupil, school?
- did he contribute to planning sessions?
- did he show evidence of benefiting from constructive criticism? praise?
- was the individual able to adjust to and perform at a higher competency level in a different academic or human relationships area from that which he saw as his capability level, but one which the team saw as a new performance area within his capabilities?
- was the team leader able to give administrative leadership without debilitating the initiative of team members?

- was the team leader able to shift from administrative to instructional role without confusion to himself and colleagues? i.e. administratively to function in a line and staff relationship, instructionally to be one of a group of educators with agreed upon objectives.

- was the team leader able to avoid the appearance of pairing off with certain members of the team?

In addition to the delineation of team behaviors in the affective domain was the need for self and group analyses of behaviors in the performance domain. Consideration was given to the team's activities in preparation, instruction, and classroom management:

- were the objectives in the area of assigned academic responsibility clear - to self? to other team members? to team leader? to aides?

- were plans adaptable to changing circumstances as a result of team consensus?
- were suggestions for change implemented at the appropriate time?
- were curriculum activities relative to the pupil's needs?
- were materials used appropriately for individual learning styles?
- did the individual vary his instructional style? or did he revert to the lecture too frequently?

- did the team member implement a variety of methods? media?
- were varying activities such as social skills, academics, physical and health related activities, and vocational exploration given proportionate emphasis?
- were directions to students clear and concise?
- did the team member use appropriate reinforcement, consistently and at the right time?
- did all members of the team keep the recording of pupil data current and usable?
- was the facility so arranged as to provide for:
  - flexiblity of program?
  - maximum utilization of space?
  - movement of students without disruption to others?
- was there provision for various size groups?
- was there provision for effective transition from one activity to another?
- did the students have a place to keep their possessions?
- were the activities within the classroom pupil-centered? task oriented?

A Teacher Evaluation check sheet incorporating the previously listed questions was developed. Each team member was rated by self, team members, team leader, and county program administrator. The divergencies in ratings were used as points for discussion in the planning sessions.

With the target group of the anticipated teamness being different from the usual student group involved in teaming in that they were mentally retarded, it was considered likely that the meeting of their particular needs could add additional elements to the period of trauma in the team development. Part of the concern expressed was the unknown reaction of mentally retarded pupils to team instruction:

- could the students adjust to changing authority figures and their different reward systems and maintain an equilibrium of control?
- could the pupils hold their attention to the task at hand without becoming caught up in the activities of the next group? For example, if one group was working on an assignment in reading when another group began an art activity (which would be viewed as more rewarding), could the pupils in the reading group wait for their reinforcement?
- or if unacceptable pupil behavior occurred in the next group, could the pupils in the first group, if not able to attend to the task at hand, at least resist the temptation to rush over to the upset group?

Since these concerns related to negative behaviors which could certainly add pressures to the emerging team, the team members set as their first priority the control of behaviors, both positive and negative.

Operationally, some of the variables in team teaching EMR students which developed were:

Initially, a highly structured, reinforcing program was utilized.

The team members tried to use simple non-verbal communication in their instructional motions for conducting, wielding, structuring the groups, and to minimize their personal non-instructional motions in order to avoid confusing the students.

Knowing that communication is based upon individual frames of reference, the team tried to eliminate self-assumptions to be more sure that they understood what the black EMR student was attempting to convey and they conversely did not assume that the student understood what was being explained and repeated explanations when necessary.

The black/white, male/female membership of the team was important in that various models were available.

The paraprofessional and teacher aide roles were of the greatest value to the team's existence. The team member who had the dual responsibility of instructional and administrative roles, needed the back-up of the paraprofessional. The teacher aide was responsible for many clerical and preparatory duties. Their most important function was in their relationship to the students and was that of maintaining immediate feedback or support to the student if the attention of the team member was necessarily diverted. The paraprofessional and aide helped maintain an attending mental

set as well as in the transition from one activity to another.

Their involvement in the planning was considered so important that additional time and pay was added to their work day to enable them to attend the after-school summary session. Both were also arriving a half hour before the students for preparing materials and working with the team to structure the learning environment. Without this additional time team planning sessions would not have been possible.

In general, the process of team teaching for EMR students is no different from the process of team teaching for other children, once the members have reached a team identity. Positive growth as reflected from the periodic use of the Teacher Evaluation sheet evidenced that teamship had occurred.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This project was undertaken in an attempt to show that there are alternatives to educating EMR students other than the typical one room, one teacher concept. Typically these programs keep the EMR student with the same teacher in the same class for his entire stay at the school. It was the belief of the administrators involved in this project that a wider variety of educational experiences could be provided if the EMR student had exposure to more of his peer group and to more adults. The team teaching model was chosen as an exploratory method of providing this exposure and of providing more adequately for the diverse learning needs of the EMR student.

The structure of team teaching is still so amorphous that any evaluation of its effectiveness and the attendant advantages or disadvantages are generally perceptions, born in the heat of change, and rarely applicable to the totality of the educational movement of which they are a part. Furthermore, in education, as in other lines of endeavor, the inability to "shake" tradition constituted the most inhibiting factor to change. Tradition provides a set of givens so built into daily existence that we fail to even regard them as malleable. To date, tradition has not been adequately challenged, thus, changes have been peripheral.

A "doctor's prescription" for stimulation and assistance to learners has never been found - but unceasing effort is essential. If

tradition is to be challenged and change and innovation is to occur in our schools and methods of teaching, opportunities must be given for acquiring the knowledge and experience that will enable them to take the lead in effecting change.

The project "Alternative Approaches to Instruction and Scheduling of Middle School EMR Students" allowed for opportunities and experiences to bring about a change in concept of instruction and classroom management of middle school educable mentally retarded students.

The evaluation phase of the project indicates that the team teaching approach is a viable alternative to the typical one teacher concept for educating educable mental retardates.

Several aspects of the program were difficult to implement, but crucial to the success of the project. It behooves the administrator who plans to initiate such a program to pay particular attention to the following findings and conclusions:

1. Personnel Selection

   It cannot be assumed that responsible leadership will emerge naturally from the teacher group. Selection of teachers should include one with leadership ability and the willingness to be the "team leader". The criteria used for identifying the leadership and teacher qualities will have to be ones on judgement coinciding with educational goals of the community and

1. Personnel Selection (cont)

specific objectives of the program.

Each of the teachers and aides should be aware of the organization of the team teaching approach and express the desire to be involved.

The teacher aides, if possible, should be from the general "neighborhood" as the students within the program.

Inservice training is of prime importance. This apparently was a strong factor in the fusion of the personnel involved. It aided them in answering such questions as:

What are my individual responsibilities?

What are my responsibilities to the team?

What are my responsibilities to the students?

What are my responsibilities for relating to the principal, guidance counselor, etc.?

The team must be a component part of the entire faculty. They should share all assigned duties and responsibilities similar to the rest of the faculty. This aids in open communication between Exceptional Child Education and other faculty members, furthering flexible programming for the students.

It is necessary for the entire team to employ experimentation and to be flexible to change within themselves as well as flexible in initiating curriculum and classroom techniques.

Finally, it was found that many "breakdowns" occurred within the project due to a lack of consistent "feedback". Administrators involved in developing a program such as this must be

1. Personnel Selection (cont)

willing to "get and stay involved" in order to provide constant re-inforcement to the team. Furthermore, the individuals involved in developing the evaluative design should be alert to feedback needed and to changes which may need to occur in the evaluative design.

2. Classroom Management

The student in the team teaching situation will be exposed to larger groups and experience more "freedom" than in prior educational experiences. Therefore, it is recommended that the personnel have training in behavior modification and implement these techniques within the classroom. These techniques should be used to facilitate both acedemic and social learning. The program set up in this project pointed out the following:

a. Initially a very highly structured, re-inforcing and rigid program was needed and that immediate tangible re-inforcements were needed.

b. As the behavior of the students changed, their attitudes toward learning changed. This called for flexibility on the part of the teachers, resulting in a "change" in the approach to curriculum. Grouping of students could be changed and scheduling revisions could be made.

c. Toward mid-year it was found that the need for highly tangible re-inforcements diminished and that the behavior

c. (cont)

modification techniques implemented could apply almost totally to academic motivation.

d. The essential reinforcers used in the beginning to modify behavior should become less and less necessary and, finally, be faded out. When this occurs, and the student experiences success and security, the curriculum itself can then become the reinforcer.

e. It is recommended that persons beginning such a project should develop their own behavioral skills checklist based on the needs of the group for which the project is designed.

3. Curriculum

The curriculum should reflect the philosophy and objectives that have been established for the program.

Individual and team planning is essential to the success of the curriculum and an appropriate amount of time should be allocated for such.

Scheduling is an important factor in curriculum design. It should be flexible in order to allow for the individual needs of students and designed to allow for change in individual schedules.

A teacher planning guide should be developed to facilitate objectives written in behavioral terms.

4. Space

The space provided for a team teaching situation must be flexible in design. It was found that the lack of flexibility in the space provided for this project impeded full implementation of the open classroom team teaching concept.

In final summary, it was concluded that the quality of the process development of the team can be reflected in desirable or undesirable changes in the behaviors of the program participants - team and students. In addition, for a student with learning problems, the chief advantage of team teaching is exposure to various teaching styles and methods and to a larger number of his peers as the team attempts to provide relevant content and learning activities on the basis of coordinated opinions in which to base instruction related to individual needs.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

_____ 1. Are the instructional objectives written on paper?

_____ 2. Are the content objectives given to the student?

_____ 3. Are all students expected to achieve the same objectives?

_____ 4. Do all students use the same instructional materials (e.g., texts)?

_____ 5. Are all students expected to follow the same procedure while in the classroom?

_____ 6. Do all students work at each subject for the same amount of time?

_____ 7. Do students spend most of their classroom time doing that which everyone else is doing?

_____ 8. May the student have any part in deciding which objectives he will use in trying to achieve an objective?

_____ 9. May the student decide which materials he will use in trying to achieve an objective?

_____ 10. May the student decide which procedures he will follow in attempting to achieve an objective?

_____ 11. May the student decide how much time he will devote to an activity?

TEACHER EVALUATION

	ACCEPTABLE	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	NOT OBSERVED
I. Preparation and Instruction			
A. Are plans for academic areas of team responsibility evident?			
B. Are objectives in these plans clear? 1. To other team members?			
2. To team leader?			
3. To aides?			
4. To self?			
C. Are plans adaptable to changing circumstances as a result of team consensus?			
D. Are materials used appropriate for meeting individual learning styles?			
E. Does he evidence implementation of a variety of: 1. Media			
2. Methods			
F. Are varying activities such as academics, social skills and vocational training given proportionate emphasis?			
G. Are curriculum activities relative to the pupils needs?			
H. Are directions to students clear, concise, and do they allow for self direction?			

	ACCEPTABLE	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	NOT OBSERVED
II. Team Roles and Relationships			
A. Does he display good pupil-teacher relationships?			
B. Does he display a positive self concept as an instructor?			
C. Does he display a cooperative attitude toward team efforts?			
D. Does he evidence flexibility in changing roles within the team?			
E. Does he share in the evaluative process?			
1. Self			
2. Team			
3. Pupil			
4. School			
F. Does he function adequately as a member of the total school faculty?			
G. Does he function adequately in his relationship to administrators?			
H. Does he function adequately in his relationship to parents?			
I. Does he contribute to planning sessions?			
J. Does he show evidence of benefiting from constructive			
1. criticism			
2. praise			

III. Operation of Classroom	ACCEPTABLE	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	NOT OBSERVED
A. Is the faculty so arranged to provide for:			
1. Flexibility of program			
2. Maximum utilization of space			
B. Does the faculty provide for a positive learning environment - i.e., interest areas?			
C. Is there provision for effective transition from one activity to another?			
D. Is there provision for various size instructional groups?			
E. Is the activity within the classroom			
1. pupil centered?			
2. task oriented?			
F. Is there provision for recording pupil performance?			

Lesson Plan

WEEK OF _____ DATE _____ 19____

TIME – SUBJECT	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RESOURCES – MATERIALS	ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES	EVALUATION AND COMMENTS